

# SECTIONALISM



The old Postville (Logan County) Court House 1840  
In which Abraham Lincoln practiced law, as reconstructed by Henry Ford  
after removal from Lincoln, Illinois, to Greenfield, Michigan, 1929

Facsimilie Manuscript of a Speech

BY ABRAHAM LINCOLN



This is an authentic photostatic copy of the original manuscript of the famous speech on sectionalism by Abraham Lincoln. The original was sold by me at auction in New York City, November 30, 1927, for \$18,000.

Notes concerning the settlement of Logan County, Illinois, history of the first Courthouse of the county, and naming of the town of Lincoln, all of which Col. Robert Latham was closely connected with, are added because of their historic interest.

*William Byatt Latham*

*Preserved, to Otto L. Schmidt on Sept 28  
1931 by William Byatt Latham*

No.



Taken from "Historical American Autographs" Published by American Art Association, Inc., of New York, N.Y.

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IMPORTANT MANUSCRIPT OF A SPEECH WRITTEN AND DELIVERED BY ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Complete Original Autograph Manuscript of a speech on "Sectionalism". Delivered (October 1, 1856) Comprised about Seventeen Hundred and Fifty Words in Lincoln's Autograph. Written on eight folio sheets.

Probably the Longest and Most Important Manuscript of a Lincoln Speech That Will Ever Likely Appear for Sale. No Other of Equal Length Has Ever Been Offered at Public Sale. This was one of the manuscripts that Lincoln left with Mrs. Grimsley (Cousin Lizzie) as a part of his "literary bureau" when he left Springfield for Washington. They were delivered to her in a carpet bag, Lincoln telling her that if he came back she was to return them to him, but that if he did not, she could dispose of them as she wished. After his death she gave perhaps a dozen manuscripts to his friends, including the above, before a servant threw the carpet bag with the remainder of the manuscript into the fire.


This manuscript, "Sectionalism" was given by Mrs. Grimsley to Colonel Robert B. Latham, a friend of Lincoln's, and on the death of Colonel Latham it came into the possession of his son, the present owner, William Latham.

The speech on sectionalism was delivered on October 1, 1856, in the Fremont campaign. Fremont was nominated for President and Dayton was nominated for Vice President in the Republican Convention held in Philadelphia on June 17, 1856. The Republicans of Illinois placed Lincoln at the head of their Electoral ticket. He had acquired a reputation as a campaign speaker, and entered into the campaign with promptness and zeal. In all, he made about fifty (50) speeches confirming himself to the State of Illinois. Only two of the fifty speeches are known to exist. -- The Present Manuscript of the Speech of October 1, 1856 and a Portion of the Speech Delivered at Galena Illinois on August 1, 1856.

Lincoln was fully aware that James Buchanan was the "dark horse" to beat in this race, and in this speech he examines sectionalism. "A little more carefully than I have heretofore done, or seen it done by others". The Democrats maintained that the Republican Party was a sectional one, and theirs was a national one. This speech on sectionalism was one of the speeches which shows the gradual growth of the argument presented in the "Divided House" speech at Springfield on June 16, 1858, delivered by Lincoln on his nomination to the Senate of the United States, in which speech he said,--

"We are now far into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with avowed object and confident promise of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only now ceased, but has constantly augmented. In my opinion, it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. 'A house divided against itself cannot stand'. I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free".

This Manuscript Is Not a Fragment, But is Complete. It was Lincoln's habit to write carefully on subjects that interested him, probably for the purpose of fixing the thought more firmly in his own mind, so that he would be



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<https://archive.org/details/sectionalismfac00linc>

prepared when the occasion arose. As far as known, there are but four complete Manuscripts of This Character Saved from the Carpet Bag. In addition to these, seven or eight separate pages were taken from other manuscripts and distributed among his friends. These seven or eight were all fragmentary to different individuals and have never been gathered together. Niccolay & Hay gave the supposed date of October 1, 1858 for each of the separated pages and the date of October 1, 1856 for the manuscript on Sectionalism. The latter is not fragmentary but it is complete and entire as Lincoln wrote it out. The use of the word 'fragmentary' indicates that it is probable that if delivered as a speech he possibly spoke at the same time on other subjects but as far as this manuscript is concerned it is complete and entire just as Lincoln wrote it.

The following quotations are from this manuscript,--

" It is constantly objected to Fremont & Dayton, that they are supported by a sectional party, who, by their sectionalism, endanger the National Union. This object, more than all others, caused men, really opposed to slavery extension, to hesitate. Practically, it is the most difficult objection we have to meet."

" For this reason, I now propose to examine it, a little more carefully than I have heretofore done, or seen it done by others.

First, then, what is the question between the parties, respectively represented by Buchanan and Fremont?

" Simply this; 'Shall slavery be allowed to extend into U.S. territories, now legally free? Buchanan says it shall, and Fremont says it shall not.

" That is the naked issue, and the whole of it. Lay the respective platforms side by side and the difference between them, will be found to amount to precisely that.

"True, each party charges upon the other, designs much beyond what is involved in the issue, as stated; but as these charges can not be fully proved either way, it is probably better to reject them on both sides, and stick to the naked issue, as it is clearly made up on the record."

" And now, to restate the question 'Shall slavery be allowed to extend into U.S. territories, now legally free? I beg to know how one side of that question is more sectional than the other? Of course I expect to effect nothing with the man who makes this charge of sectionalism, without caring whether it is just or not. But the candid, fair man who has been puzzled with this charge, I do ask how is one side of this question, more sectional, than the other? I beg of him to consider well, and answer calmly.

" If one side be as sectional as the other, nothing is gained, as to sectionalism, by changing sides; so that each must choose sides of the question on some other ground, as I should think, according, as the one side or the other, shall appear nearest right. If he shall really think slavery ought to be extended, let him go to Buchanan; if he thinks it ought not, let him go to Fremont.

"But Fremont and Dayton, are both residents of the free-states; and this fact has been vaunted in high places, as excessive sectionalism.





## Sectionalism

It is constantly objected to Fremont & Dayton, that they are supported by a sectional party, who, by their sectionalism, endanger the National Union. - This objection, more than all others, causes men, really opposed to slavery extension, to hesitate. - Practically, it is the most difficult objection we have to meet.

For this reason, I now propose to examine it, a little more carefully than I have heretofore done, or seen <sup>it</sup> done by others -

And, then, what is the ~~main~~ question between the parties, respectively represented by Buchanan and Fremont?

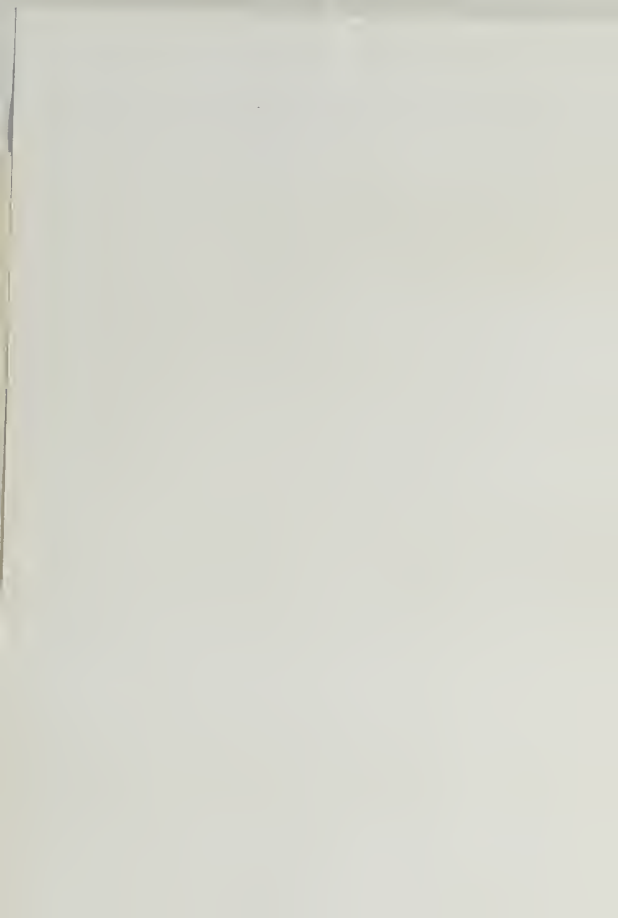
Simply this. "Shall slavery be allowed to extend into U. S. territories, now legally free?"

Buchanan says, it shall; and Fremont says, it shall not -

That is the naked issue, and the wholes of it - Lay this <sup>perfectly</sup> platform side by side, and the differences between them, will be found to amount to precisely this -

True, each party charges upon the other, designs much beyond what is involved in the issue, as stated; but as these charges can not be fully proved either way, it is probably better to reject them on both sides, and stick to the naked issue - and, as it is clearly made up on the record

And now, to restate the question "Shall slavery be allowed to extend into U. S. territories, now legally free?" I beg to know how one side of that question is more sectional than the other? Of course I expect to affect



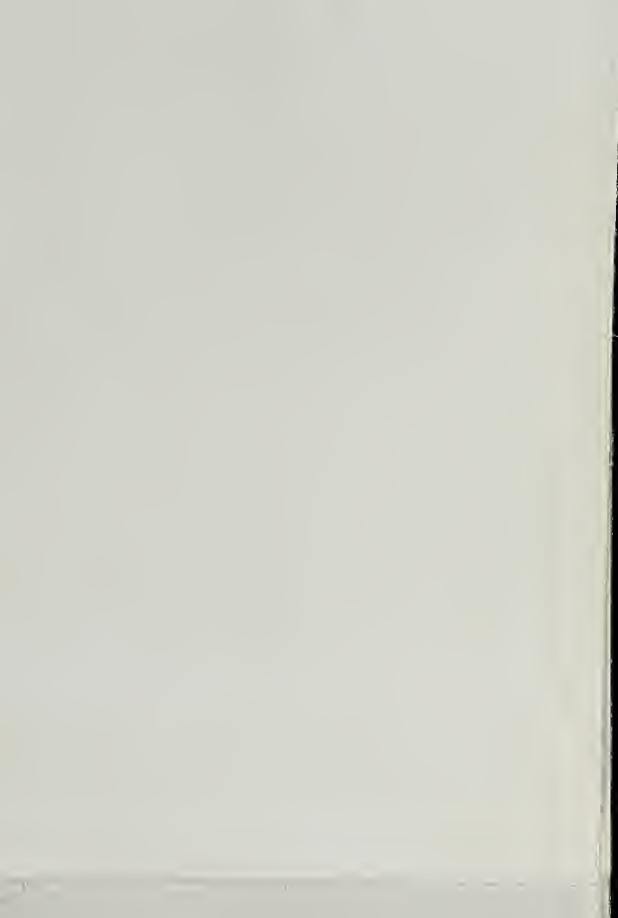
nothing with the man who makes the charge of sectionalism, without caring whether it is just or not — But of the candor, fair <sup>man who has been purged of the charge</sup> man I do ask now is one side of this question, more sectional, than the other? I beg of him to consider well, and answer calmly —

If one show he as sectional as the other, nothing is gained, as to sectionalism, by changing sides; so that each must choose sides of the question on some other ground as I should think, according, as the one side or the other, shall appear nearest right —

If he shall really think slavery ought to be extended, let him go to Buchanan; if he think it ought not let go to Fremont —

But, Fremont and Dayton, are both residents of the free states; and this fact has been vaunted, in high places, as excessive sectionalism —

While interested individuals become indignant and excited, against the manifestation of sectionalism, I am very happy to know, that the Constitution remains calm — keeps cool — upon this subject — It does say that President and Vice President shall be residents of different states; but it does not say one must live in a slave, and the other in a free state — It has been a custom to take one from a slave, and the other from a free state; but the custom has not at all been uniform — In 1828 Gen. Jackson and Mr. Calhoun, both from slave states, were placed on the same ticket; and Mr. Adams and Mr. Rush were opponents



both from the free states, were pithier against them. Gen. Jackson and Mr. Calhoun were elected; and qualified and served under the election; yet the whole thing never suggested the idea of sectionalism -

In 1841, the president, Gen. Harrison, died, by which Mr. Tyler, the Vice-President, <sup>& a slave state man,</sup> became president - Mr. Mangum, another slave-state man, was placed in the Vice Presidential chair, served out the term, and no fuss about it - no sectionalism thought of.

In 1853 the present president came into office - He is a free-state man - Mr. King, the new Vice President elect, was a slave state man; but he never without entering on the duties of his office - At first, his vacancy was filled by Atchison, another slave-state man; but he soon resigned, and the place was supplied by Wright, a free-state man - So that right now, and for the year and a half last past, our president and vice-president are both actually free-state men -

But, it is said, the friends of Fremont, avow the purpose of electing him exclusively by free-state votes, and that this is unendurable sectionalism -

This statement of fact, is not exactly true. With the friends of Fremont, it is an expected necessity, but it is not an "avowed purpose," to elect him, if at all, principally, by free state vote. But it is, with equal intensity, true



That Buchanan's friends expect to elect him,  
if at all, chiefly by slave-state votes—

Here, again, the sectionalism, is just as much  
on one side as the other—





The thing which gives most color to the charge of Sectionalism, made against those who oppose the spread of slavery into free territory, is the fact that they can get no vote, in the slave-states, while their opponents get all, or nearly so, in the slave-states, and also, a large number, in the free states. - So that it is another way, the Extensionists, can get votes all over the Nation, while the Restrictionists can get them only in the free states.

This being the fact, why is it so? It is not because one side of the question regarding them, is more sectional than the other; nor because of any difference in the mental or moral structure of the people North and South. - It is because, in their question, the people of the South have an immediate palpably pecuniary interest; while, <sup>as far as the people of</sup> in the North, it is merely an abstract question of moral right, with only slight, and remote pecuniary interest attached.

The slaves of the South, at a moderate estimate, are worth a thousand millions of dollars. Let it be permanently settled that this property may extend to new territory, without restraint, and it greatly enhances, perhaps quite double, its value at once. - This immense, palpable pecuniary interest, on the question of extending slavery, unites the Southern people, as one man. - But it can not be demonstrated that the North will gain a dollar by restricting it.

Moral principle is all, or nearly all, that unites us of the North. - Pity too, it is so, but this is a poorer bond than pecuniary interest.



Right here is the plan con of these perfect  
union <sup>And see how it works</sup> and went of it. If a Southern  
man aspires to be president, they choke him  
down instantly, in order that the glittering prize  
of the presidency, may be held up, on short-  
en terms, to the greedy eyes of Northern ambi-  
tion. With this they tempt us, and lead us  
up to us.

The democratic party, in 1844, elected a Southern  
president. Since then, they have neither  
had a <sup>Southern</sup> candidate for elections, or nominations.  
Their Conventions of 1848, 1852 and 1856, have  
been struggles exclusively among Northern men,  
each vying to outbid the other for the South-  
ern vote. The South standing calmly by  
to finally say going, going, gone, to the high-  
est bidder, and at the same time to make  
its power more distinctly seen, and thereby  
to secure a still higher bid at the next  
succeeding struggle.

"Action, speak louder than words", is the  
maxim; and, if true, the South now dis-  
tinctly says, to the North "Give us the meas-  
ure and you take the reins".

The total withdrawal of Southern sym-  
pathy, <sup>for the presidency</sup> multiplies the number of Northern  
ones. These lost in competing with each  
other, commit themselves to the utmost  
rage that, through their own greediness, they  
have the least hope their Northern support  
can ever bear. Having got committed, in a  
race of competition, necessity drives them  
into union to sustain themselves. Each, at  
first secures all he can, on personal affairs



ments to him, and through hopes resting on him personally - Next, they unite with one another, and with the perfectly bonded South, to make the offensive position they have got into, "a party measure". This alone, large conditional members are secured -

When the repeal of the Missouri Compromise was first proposed, at the North there was, literally "nobody" in favor of it - In February 1854 our Legislature, in an extra session - Thru. Chas. Douglas sought an endorsement of his then pending measure of Repeal - In our Legislature there were about 70 Democrats to 30 Reps - The former held a caucus, in which it was resolved to join Douglas, this seemed a serious blow - Some of the members of that caucus, bolted - would not stand it - and they now divulge the secrets - They say that the caucus fairly confessed that the Repeal was wrong, and they placed their determination to withdraw it, solely on the ground that it was necessary to arouse Douglas - Here we have the direct evidence of how the Nebraska bill obtained its strength in Illinois - It was given, not in a sense of right, but with the teeth of a sense of wrong, to arouse Douglas. So Illinois was swindled - So New England, for Prichard; Michigan for Cass, ~~and~~ Pennsylvania for Buchanan, and all for the Democratic party -

And when, by such means, they have got a large portion of the Northern people into a position contrary to their own honest impulses, and sense of right; they have the influence



to turn upon those who so strenuously and  
call them sectional.

Were it not too serious a matter, this  
cool impudence would be laughable, to say  
the least.

Returning to the question "Shall slavery be  
allowed to extend into W. S. Territory now before  
free?"

This is a sectional question — that is to say,  
it is a question, in its nature calculated to  
divide the American people geographically —

Who is to blame for that? Who can help  
it? Either side can help it, but how?  
Simply by yielding to the other side. There  
is no other way — In the whole range of possi-  
bility, there is no other way — Then, which side  
shall yield? To this again, there can be but  
one answer — the side which is in the wrong —

True, we differ, as to which side is wrong;  
and we boldly say, let all who really  
think slavery right to spread into free  
territory, openly go over against us — That is  
where they rightfully belong.

But why should any go, who really think  
slavery right not to spread? Do they really  
think the right ought to yield to the wrong?  
Are they afraid to stand by the right? Do  
they fear that the constitution is too weak  
to sustain them in the right? Do they really  
think that by right demanding to wrong, the life  
of our constitution, our honor, and our liberties,  
can possibly be bettered?





## SETTLEMENT OF LOGAN COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

The old Indian trail of Illinois began at the Mississippi River near where the city of Alton now stands, pushed northwestward or past the present site of Edwardsville, Carlinville and Springfield, skirted Elkhart Hill, crossed Salt Creek, went to the present site of Lincoln, and then made directly over the prairies to the present site of the city of Peoria.

In 1812 Ninian Edwards, then Governor of Illinois territory, marched a mounted militia of rangers along this trail and destroyed a Kickapoo village on Kickapoo Creek, about two miles west of the present site of Lincoln. Always afterwards the trail was known as the Edwards Trace.

In 1818, when Illinois was admitted to the Union as a sovereign state, there was not a single white inhabitant within the confines of what is now Logan County. That which is now Logan County was then part of Bond County and was inhabited by Indians of the Kickapoo tribe, whose ancestors had driven out the original Illinois Indians.

The first white settlements in what is now Logan County were made in the year 1819. In the spring of that year James Latham and family coming from Kentucky settled Elkhart Hill.

Here they were visited by Frederick Ernst, a gentleman of wealth and education, who had come from Germany to the new State of Illinois to locate a German Settlement. Returning home he wrote a monograph called "Observations made upon a journey through the interior of the United States in the year 1819." This was translated in 1903. In it he speaks of finding Mr. Latham at Elkhart Grove and says that "the farmer here, Mr. Latham, had thirty acres enclosed by



the wood of the blue ash" and that he also planted thirty acres on the prairie which thrived beyond all expectation. He describes the farm as being "the one situated farthest North in the whole state of Illinois, except perhaps the Military lands on the other side of the Illinois River.

In January of 1821, a treaty, before that time entered into between the Government and the Kickapoo Indians, was proclaimed. By this treaty, the Kickapoos ceded to the Government all their "lands on the Sangamon and the Onaquississippi." "Onaquississippi" was the Kickapoo name for Salt Creek and meant the "river of the shell-bark hickories."

Shortly after the proclamation of the Kickapoo treaty, the main body of the Kickapoos withdrew from the territory now known as Logan County, but for fifteen years thereafter individual Indians still remained in and about the timber. The relations between the Kickapoos and the early settlers were at all times friendly.

About 1820 James Latham built a horse mill at the Grove. Before this early settlers had been compelled to go to Edwardsville to mill. Settlers coming to the mill from a great distance to get their grinding done camped over night waiting their turn.

The first school taught in what is now Logan county was taught by Erastus Wright in 1821 in James Latham's double cabin at Elkhart Hill

In 1821 Sangamon County was created by the Illinois Legislature with Springfield the county seat. As created, it included the entire central portion of the State.

James Latham was the first probate judge of Sangamon County. His appointment being signed by Governor Bond, the first Governor of Illinois.



In 1824 he was appointed Indian agent at Fort Clark (now Peoria), by President John Quincy Adams, and moved his family there and died December 4, 1826. His widow returned to Elkhart Hill with the family and lived there twenty years after her husband's death, passing away August 11, 1847. They are both buried in the Latham Cemetery at Elkhart Hill.

The oldest son, Richard Latham, born December 23, 1798, in Bowling Green, Warren County, Kentucky, returned to Elkhart Hill on the death of his father. Here he built and kept a post house, known as The Old Kentucky House. This was a stopping place for early settlers in the 1820's and later, for the lawyers who traveled the circuit, Judge Treat, David Davis, Logan, Stuart, Baker, Edwards, Matheny and Lincoln, and others who stopped on their way to and from Springfield to Postville and Bloomington. Richard lived at Elkhart Hill until 1853, when they sold the farm for the highest price land had ever sold for in Logan county. Mr. Latham then retired from business and moved with his family to Springfield, where he lived until his death.

#### THE NAMING OF THE CITY OF LINCOLN

Colonel Robert B. Latham, the father of the writer, was the youngest child of James Latham, and a year old when his father settled at Elkhart Hill, being born in 1818, the year Illinois was admitted to statehood.

After his father's death in 1824 he attended school for a while in Morgansfield, Kentucky. At 16 he entered the high school at Springfield. Nearly every morning Mr. Lincoln used to call him in when on the way to school and ask him what the lesson was for that



day and help him. Mr. Lincoln later told my mother Robert helped him in his education. When Mrs. Latham asked in what way, Mr. Lincoln replied, "By brushing up on his early school days and in studies that Mr. Lincoln had never had."

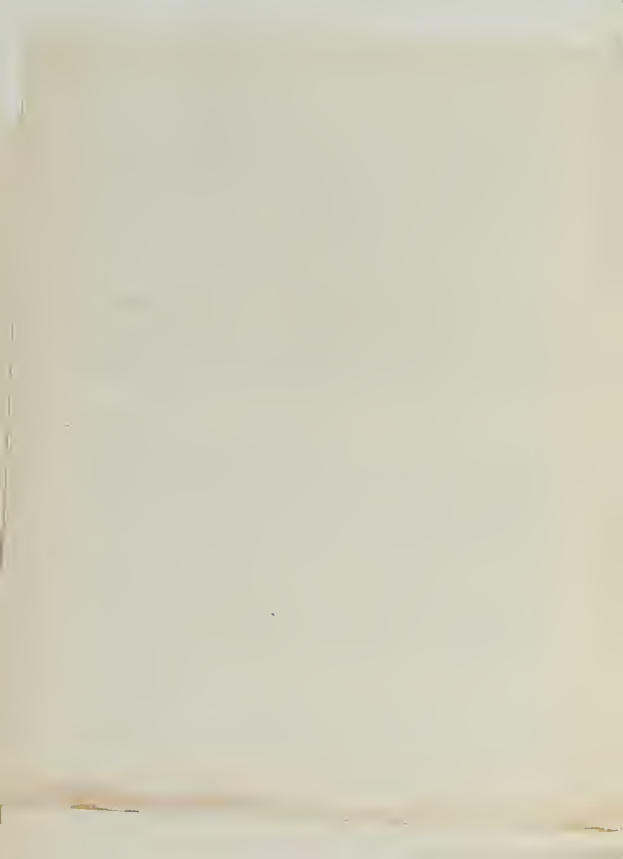
After finishing school at Springfield he returned to Elkhart Hill where he engaged in farming on the old <sup>Latham</sup> Lincoln place.

In 1850 he sold the place and moved to Mt. Pulaski, then the county seat, where he engaged in the real estate business. In that year Colonel Latham was elected sheriff of Logan County.

1853 was marked by the coming of the first steam railroad into Logan county. The Alton & Sengemont railroad, from Alton to Springfield, now part of the Chicago & Alton, was built in 1852 and early in 1853 preparations were made to extend the road through Logan and McLean counties, to Bloomington, with Chicago as an ultimate objective.

Mr. Latham was engaged to secure the right of way through Logan County. Virgil Hickox of Springfield was a director of the road, and John D. Gillette, a relative of Mr. Latham's by marriage, an extensive Logan County land owner and cattle raiser, decided to locate a new town site along the proposed railroad right of way.

Mr. Latham went to Philadelphia to purchase the town site. They were personal friends of Abraham Lincoln and he was their personal attorney and attorney for the new railroad. Meeting at the office of Mr. Lincoln, in Springfield, August 24, 1853, for the purpose of having the form of deed drawn up for the town lot sale, Mr. Lincoln said they would have a name for the new town before they could draw up the papers. Mr. Latham replied, "Well name it Lincoln". Mr. Lincoln said, "Go ahead, boys, but nothing of that





name ever amounted to anything." So the new town site was given the name of Lincoln.

The city of Lincoln, Illinois, has the sole and unique distinction of being the only town in the United States named for Abraham Lincoln before he was President, or before he was thought of being President.

At the public sale of lots in the new town, held August 29, 1853, Mr. Lincoln purchased a water meadow from the wagon of a farmer and divided the meadow with the proprietors of the town and remarked, "Now we have christened the new town."

With the laying out of the new town of Lincoln, the proprietors secured the passage of a bill through the Legislature, submitting to the voters of the county the question of the removal of the county seat from Mt. Pulaski to the new town site. At an election held in November of 1853, the proposition of removal won, and Lincoln became the third county seat of Logan County.

In 1860 Colonel Latham was elected to the Legislature. General Palmer at that time a Republican, stumped the district for Mr. Latham. Richard J. Oglesby was a member of the Senate that year. Senator Collum was speaker of the house; Judge Waldon, afterwards on the Supreme bench at Washington, was a member of the house. In 1861 Mr. Latham went on to Washington at Mr. Lincoln's first inaugural. While in Washington he was the guest of United States Senator Trumble. After Mr. Latham's return from Washington, and President Lincoln's declaration of war, Colonel Latham organized the 106th Regiment of Illinois volunteers, receiving his appointment as Colonel of the Regiment from Governor Richard Yates, the war Governor of Illinois.

In 1846 Colonel Latham was married to Georgianna P. Gillette, a daughter of John Gillette, Sr. She died in 1853.



In 1856, Colonel Latham was married to Savillah Wyatt, the daughter of William Wyatt, one of the early settlers of Morgantown.

In 1857-58, Mr. Latham built the Latham Home on Block 1, of the original town of Lincoln. Here, in this home, Mr. Lincoln stopped with Mr. Latham whenever he was in Lincoln. Not only Lincoln, but Grant, several of the Vice-Presidents, David Davis, Ogleby, Collum, Weldon, in fact practically all the old governors, senators, and United States Judges were guests of my father at this home.

Colonel Latham died April 16, 1895.

*William Wyatt Latham*

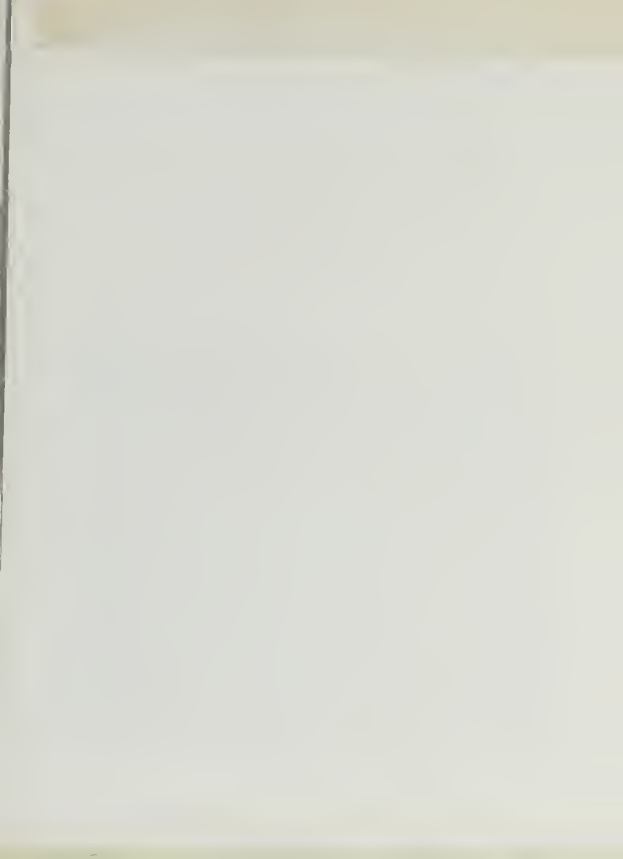




THE LATHAM HOME, LINCOLN, ILLINOIS

BUILT IN 1857

"WHERE ABRAHAM LINCOLN WAS A FREQUENT GUEST"



## HISTORY OF LOGAN COUNTY'S FIRST COURT HOUSE AT POSTVILLE

The first Court House of Logan County, Illinois, a photograph of which appears on the cover, built in Postville in 1840, then the county seat, but since which time has been merged with the City of Lincoln, is of great historical value.

The bill creating Logan County was presented to the Illinois Legislature January 16, 1839, by Abraham Lincoln, Chairman of the Committee on Counties in the Eleventh General Assembly.

The bill sponsored by Mr. Lincoln passed both houses of the Legislature and was signed by Governor Carlin February 15, 1839.

Logan County was named by Mr. Lincoln for Dr. John Logan, a member of the Legislature with Mr. Lincoln, a well known southern Illinois pioneer and politician and father of General John A. Logan.

The bill creating Logan County named three commissioners to locate the county's first county seat. The commissioners who resided out of the new county met at Postville, June 3, 1839.

The Court House was built in 1840 and it was in this historical building that Judge Treat and Judge David Davis held court. Peter Cartwright conducted religious services. Lincoln had just been admitted to the bar and this is the only court house still in existence in which Lincoln tried his earliest cases. It was in this building that such prominent lawyers as Baker, Edwards, Stuart, Walker and others argued to court and juries.

In 1848 the county seat was moved to Mt. Pulaski where the citizens built a new brick court house. The county commissioners sold the Postville Court House to private parties which precipitated a lawsuit in which Abraham Lincoln represented the county. The old Court House and grounds, after changing hands several times, were sold to Henry Ford in 1929 and the building was moved by him in its entirety to his American Village at Greenfield, Michigan.







